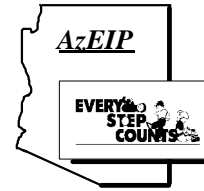


Chapter 6



COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Arizona Early Intervention Program

Table of Contents

| <u>Section</u> | <u>Page</u> |
|--|--------------------|
| 6.0.0 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development | 2 |
| 6.1.0 Authority | 2 |
| 6.2.0 Policy | |
| 6.2.1 Overview | 2 |
| 6.2.2 AzEIP Service Providing Agencies | 2 |
| 6.2.3 General Supervision | 2 |
| 6.2.4 Preservice Professional Preparation | 3 |
| 6.2.5 Coordination with the Part B CSPD | 3 |
| 6.3.0 Personnel Qualifications Policy | |
| 6.3.1 General | 3 |
| 6.3.2 Core Team Members | 4 |
| 6.3.3 Other Team Members | 5 |
| 6.3.4 Ongoing Efforts to Recruit Service Coordinators | 5 |
| 6.4.0 Standards of Practice Policy | |
| 6.4.1 Policy | 6 |
| 6.4.2 Procedures | 7 |
| 6.4.3 Practice Guidelines | 8 |

6.0.0 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)**6.1.0 Authority:** 20 U.S.C. 1431 §635; 34 CFR 303.360, 361, 380-382**6.2.0 Policy****6.2.1 Overview**

DES/AzEIP coordinates and maintains a comprehensive system of personnel development known as the AzEIP Professional Development System, which directly coordinates with the Continuous Monitoring and Quality Improvement System (Chapter 2) and the Technical Assistance System (Chapter 5). The AzEIP Professional Development System:

1. provides for inservice and preservice training to be conducted on an interdisciplinary basis, to the extent appropriate;
2. provides training for a variety of personnel needed to meet the requirements of Part C; and
3. ensures that the training provided relates specifically to:
 - A. understanding the basic components of the early intervention system in Arizona;
 - B. meeting the interrelated social or emotional, health, developmental, and educational needs of children who are AzEIP eligible; and
 - C. assisting families to enhance the development of their children by their full participation in development and implementation of Individualized Family Service Plans.

6.2.2 AzEIP Service Providing Agencies

DES/AzEIP and the AzEIP service providing agencies:

1. Support coordinated in-service training and continuing professional development opportunities to ensure that the early intervention personnel, whether employed or contracted, are appropriately knowledgeable and skilled in the delivery of early intervention services, and understand the basic components and requirements of AzEIP.
2. Establish and maintain consistent, statewide personnel qualifications for all employed or contracted early intervention providers.
3. Monitor early intervention programs and contractors through the Continuous Quality Improvement and Monitoring System to ensure consistent, statewide adherence to the personnel requirements.
4. Use a flexible combination of methods to ensure that personnel are trained, by collaborating to:
 - A. provide training directly to personnel.
 - B. develop and share training across agencies.

- C. contract with knowledgeable individuals or organizations to provide training.
- D. sponsor or endorse existing conferences or training events that promote the knowledge and skills of early intervention personnel and/or the awareness and understanding of AzEIP.

6.2.3 General Supervision

1. DES/AzEIP monitors compliance with the Professional Development System requirements through the Continuous Monitoring and Quality Improvement System and implements Corrective Action Plans when a program or agency has not complied with the requirements.
2. AzEIP's Technical Assistance System also coordinates with the Professional Development System, providing ongoing guidance and assistance to early intervention professionals to enhance their knowledge, confidence, and performance.

6.2.4 Preservice Professional Preparation

1. The AzEIP Professional Development System promotes varied approaches to extend the appropriate knowledge, skills, and understanding of AzEIP to preservice professional preparation programs. The AzEIP Professional Development System provides technical assistance and guidance to assist universities and college programs to successfully integrate the identified requirements for professional knowledge, skills, and understanding of AzEIP into course work and curricula.
2. Pre-service training programs may request approval from DES/AzEIP to offer a pre-service training program as a mechanism to fulfill certain AzEIP Standards of Practice requirements. (See Section 6.4.0 for information about the Standards of Practice) Upon completion, graduates of AzEIP-approved pre-service training programs will have satisfied the agreed-upon requirements for the AzEIP Standards of Practice.

6.2.5 Collaboration with Part B

1. DES/AzEIP's professional development system is consistent with the comprehensive personnel development system for Part B, as appropriate.
2. DES/AzEIP and ADE work jointly to ensure consistent training for Part C and Part B personnel on the requirements of the Transition Intergovernmental Agreement and the Child Find Intergovernmental Agreement.

6.3.0 Personnel Qualifications Policy

6.3.1 General

1. AzEIP personnel qualifications apply to personnel who are providing early intervention services to children and their families. The qualifications include

two components: professional/ discipline qualifications and the Standards of Practice.

2. The personnel qualifications are established for the following personnel categories:
 - A. Core team members: developmental specialists; occupational therapists; physical therapists; service coordinators; and speech-language pathologists.
 - B. Other team members: psychologists, social workers, and other Part C early intervention service providers.
3. The State of Arizona maintains professional licensure, certification, and/or registration for many of the disciplines used in the provision of early intervention services. This licensure, certification, and/or registration is independent of AzEIP.

6.3.2 Core Team Members

1. Professional/discipline qualifications for developmental specialists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, service coordinators, and speech-language pathologists include the following requirements:
 - A. A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood, Early Childhood Special Education, Family Studies, Speech-Language Pathology, Physical Therapy, or Occupational Therapy; OR
 - B. A Bachelor's degree in a closely related field with review of coursework and approval by AzEIP; OR
 - C. Early Childhood Teacher Certification or Early Childhood Education Teacher Endorsement from the Arizona Department of Education; OR
 - D. For developmental specialists, if hired in the AzEIP system as a developmental specialist before July 1, 2001, documentation of continued satisfactory work in the AzEIP system from that date of hire.
3. When a core team member is employed or contracted as a professional to deliver services for which the State of Arizona has enacted or authorized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements through legislation or practice act, the core team member shall also meet the proscribed professional requirements and rules of professional conduct for that discipline or profession.
 - A. Development Specialist –As applicable, including Early Childhood Teacher Certification or Early Childhood Education Teacher Endorsement from the Arizona Department of Education.
 - B. Occupational Therapist (OT) – Current, valid Arizona license from the Arizona Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners to practice occupational therapy in early intervention.

- C. Physical Therapist (PT) – Current, valid Arizona license from the Arizona State Board of Physical Therapy to practice physical therapy in early intervention.
 - D. Speech/Language Pathologist (SLP) – Current, valid Arizona license from the Arizona Department of Health Services to practice as a Speech-Language Pathologist in early intervention. (If a speech-language pathologist is completing a clinical fellowship year (CFY), he or she must possess a valid, temporary Arizona license and documentation of an approved supervision plan under a Speech-Language Pathologist who has a current, valid Arizona license and the American Speech and Hearing Association Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC)).
- 4. If employed or contracted as a professional in a discipline which is not a licensed, registered, or certified profession (e.g., developmental specialist), the practitioner shall maintain active and on-going professional development activities, as required and supported under current contract or employment with an AzEIP participating agency.
 - 5. The roles and responsibilities of core team members implementing the AzEIP team-based model require independence and the ability to make changes with the families to the recommendations and strategies for the family to achieve their outcomes. Individuals are responsible for knowing and complying with the AzEIP personnel qualifications as provided in these policies, including complying with and maintaining any applicable State or other licensure requirement.

6.3.3 Other Team Members

- 1. When a team member is employed or contracted as a professional to deliver services for which the State of Arizona has enacted or authorized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements through legislation or practice act, the team member shall also meet the proscribed professional requirements and rules of professional conduct for that discipline or profession.
- 2. A Psychologist must hold a current, valid license from the Arizona Board of Psychologist Examiners with identified competency and experience in early childhood or hold a current, valid certification from the Arizona Department of Education as a school psychologist.
- 3. A Social Worker must hold a current, valid license as a social worker from the Arizona Board of Behavioral Health Examiners.

6.3.4 Ongoing Efforts to Recruit Personnel

- 1. The State of Arizona makes ongoing good-faith efforts to recruit and hire appropriately and adequately trained personnel to support families of children who are AzEIP eligible. In geographic areas of the State where there are significant, documented shortages of personnel that meet the State's

qualifications, hiring the most qualified personnel available who are making satisfactory progress toward completing the Bachelor's degree requirements is permitted in those exceptional circumstances under the following conditions:

- A. The employer or contractor, along with the individual, develops and completes a written plan to obtain the course work necessary to meet the Bachelor's degree requirement within three years from the date of hire into the AzEIP system and submits to AzEIP for review and approval;
 - B. The documentation of the individual's progress in completing the plan shall be annually reviewed and updated by the employer/contractor with documentation maintained in the personnel file to continue employment/contracting;
 - C. While in the process of completing the requirements of the Bachelor's degree and/or AzEIP Standards of Practice, the employer/contractor shall review quarterly, at a minimum, 10% of the service coordinator's caseload using the Child File Audit tool, in order to maintain quality assurance; and
 - D. A final evaluation of the individual's knowledge of early intervention and skills in delivering early intervention services will be conducted if he/she has not completed the degree requirement at the end of the three year period from the initial hire date. This evaluation shall consider the documentation of job performance; demonstration of annual progress in completing the degree plan; individual circumstance which prohibits the completion of the degree plan; and passing scores on the AzEIP Standards of Practice tests and attendance at the AzEIP Policies and Professionalism training. Should the employer/contractor determine that individual should be retained, the employer/contractor may apply to the DES/AzEIP office for an extension to complete the Bachelor's degree to retain the individual.
 - E. All of the above documentation must be maintained in the individual's personnel file to be reviewed during monitoring.
2. The above provision shall not enable the State or any of its providers to hire or employ individuals in positions requiring professional licensure, certification, or registration, unless they comply with the licensure, certification, or registration requirements appropriate for their field.

6.4.0 Standards of Practice

6.4.1. Policy

1. The AzEIP Standards of Practice describe the individual knowledge necessary for effective early intervention practice.
 - A. The Standards of Practice requires the core team members to demonstrate knowledge in the following content areas:
 - (1) Child and Family (includes early childhood development and developmental risks in child development for children ages, birth to three, and the family context that supports development).

- (2) Initial Planning Process and the Individualized Family Service Plan (IPP/IFSP) (includes the principles and practice of referral, evaluation, intervention, ongoing assessment, and transition for children and families from the early intervention program).
 - (3) Policies and Professionalism (includes information about federal law governing early intervention and how those laws are implemented in Arizona).
- B. Demonstration of knowledge may be completed by the following methods:
 - (1) Child and Family and Initial Planning Process and Individualized Family Service Plan: pass the test or complete the approved early intervention coursework through Northern Arizona University or Arizona State University.
 - (2) Policies and Professionalism: complete the training
- C. Core team members shall complete the Standards of Practice within three years from the date of hire into early intervention.
- 2. An individual may take the test for the Child and Family or the IPP/IFSP AzEIP Standards of Practice modules up to three times within a one-year period.
- 3. Other team members (i.e., non-core team members) may complete the Standards of Practice.
- 4. The application of knowledge from the Standards of Practice is monitored through the processes and procedures of the Continuous Monitoring and Quality Improvement System, which includes on-site monitoring visits and, specifically, use of the personnel file audit. See Chapter 2, *Monitoring*. Additionally, ongoing support for early intervention agencies and programs is provided through the Technical Assistance System, including the efforts of the Technical Assistance and Monitoring Specialists and the TA Cadre. See Chapter 5, *Technical Assistance System*.

6.4.2 Procedures

- 1. AzEIP programs or contractors maintain the personnel files for their employees or contractors who provide early intervention services to document that they meet all current professional and AzEIP personnel qualifications. (Individuals are responsible for knowing and complying with the AzEIP personnel qualifications as provided in these policies, including complying with and maintaining any applicable State or other licensure requirements.)
- 2. All AzEIP service providing agencies are required to complete the Personnel File Audit (PFA) for their early intervention personnel, whether employed or contracted, under the requirements of the monitoring system. The PFA includes components to monitor compliance with the AzEIP

Standards of Practice for early intervention personnel. *See* Chapter 2, Monitoring.

3. To register for a Standards of Practice test or training, individuals contact the AzEIP Staff Development Training Project at Northern Arizona University, Institute for Human Development (NAU). (www.nau.edu/ihd/asdtp; tel: 1-928-523-8131)
4. Study guides are available by contacting NAU.
5. If accommodations are needed for a test, an individual should submit the request in writing with the supporting documentation to NAU according to the Americans with Disabilities Act.
6. After completion of a test or training, NAU issues a Certificate of Completion for the specific module. When an individual has completed all the components, NAU issues a Certificate of Completion of the Standards of Practice.
7. An individual may also complete approved early intervention coursework at Northern Arizona University or Arizona State University, at which time the university will issue the Certificate.

6.4.3 Practice Guidelines

1. Professionals are encouraged to create or join study groups for the Standards of Practice test, using the study guides from NAU's website.
2. As part of the on-going, continuous professional development in early intervention, all core team members are encouraged to participate in regular meetings and/or conferencing with team members, or other forms of mentorship, collegial support, and/or supervision.